

The North Yakima Conservation District has continued to build upon its 1998 activities and projects with a fully diverse and successful 1999 district program. The NYCD program continues to address local natural resource problems and issues that effect our community. The activities and projects listed represent the core of the 1999 North Yakima Conservation District program.

The following descriptions detail North Yakima Conservation District's 1999 district programs, and many of the accomplishments of those projects.

MOXEE DRAIN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE BMP IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT 1994-Present

Started in 1994, this Project addresses the non-point source pollution problem of the Moxee Drain and it's impacts upon the Yakima River. This Project uses a multi-entity approach to solve the Drains' impacts and provides adequate protection of the resource base. Project emphasis is directed at protecting the 7500 acres of furrow irrigated hop ground that causes approximately 95% of the non-point source pollution problem associated with the Moxee Drain.

Components of this Project include:

- Environmental Protection Agency 319 Grant, awarded to NYCD and administered by Ecology to provide technical assistance, monitoring program, information and education, planning assistance, one on one landowner (producer) contact, and overall Project Administration. (1994-1997)
- Centennial Clean Water Grant, awarded to NYCD and administered by Ecology to provide technical assistance, monitoring program, information and education, planning assistance, one on one landowner (producer) contact, and overall Project Administration. (1998-Present)

These two grant awards created the "backbone" or "hub" of this Hydrologic Unit project.

- Natural Resources Conservation Service, PL83-566 Small Watershed Project, titled "Moxee Watershed Plan" sponsored by NYCD. This Plan provides technical and financial assistance for the conversion of "furrow " irrigated lands to drip / trickle irrigation systems. (1994-Present)
- Farm Service Agency "Special Project " designation to the Moxee Watershed, sponsored by NYCD, to provide financial assistance to the Project. (1994, 1995, and 1996)
- United States Department of Agriculture's, Environmental Quality Incentives Program-EQIP. The conservation districts of the Yakima River Basin established Local Working Groups to create Geographic Priority Areas (GPA) to utilize this Program. The program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and provides technical and financial assistance to the established GPA's.
- Local landowner and producer participation, to provide technical and financial assistance to the project. Without this component the Project would have never happened.

These four "programs" created the "meat" or "spokes" of this Hydrologic Unit project.

Project Highlights include:

- Reducing sediment loads from their historical levels (1974-1981) of 43.0 tons per day during the irrigation season to a projected 14.8 tons per day in 1999.(17.9 tons in 1998)
- Conversion of 4591 acres from furrow irrigated lands to drip irrigation systems. (Spring 1999 inventory data).
- An additional 600 plus acres will be contracted by September and will be converted to drip systems over the next two years
- 100% landowner participation. All of the landowners that utilize furrow irrigation are participating in NYCD's Project.

- Based on the actual cost to convert to drip irrigation systems (\$1000/ac), acres converted, and the amount of incentives utilized, the average cost-share rate is approximately 38.4%. This in turn requires a financial commitment from the landowner of over \$616/ac to participate in this Project.
- Basin wide use of Polyacryimide (PAM) as a "stop-gap" BMP to achieve better water quality.
- The North Yakima Conservation District has implemented this Project at 11.6% total administration and overhead costs. "Give a district a dollar they'll put 88¢ on the ground, and find another matching dollar to boot."

The success of this Project is the result of many entities and programs being brought together by NYCD to address a resource issue with local landowners in a win-win scenario.

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM 1998-2001

North Yakima Conservation District's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a new program and tool for landowners. CREP enhances and protects water quality, fish habitat and stream stability through the use of riparian buffers. The program is flexible, administered by NYCD, designed to compensate the landowner for good land stewardship and helps address the Endangered Species Act concerns of the Yakima River Basin.

NORTH YAKIMA CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM 1995-Present

This on-going District Program provides a wide variety of information and educational resources. NYCD provides in class presentation as well as field trip related experiences to local schools. NYCD has established several scholarships for continued education and "conservation camp" experiences for all school districts within NYCD. Additionally NYCD's I&E program reaches the general public through participation at Central Washington State Fair, workshops and expositions. The objective of this Program is to provide information and education related to all natural resource protection issues of the NYCD.

NYCD'S WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM 1998-Present

NYCD has established a water quality-monitoring program for the entire District. The program is designed to establish baseline data on the hundreds of stream miles within the District. By monitoring streams NYCD will be able to identify and target specific areas of water quality concern with implementation programs.